

## Lessons Learned Record of Interview

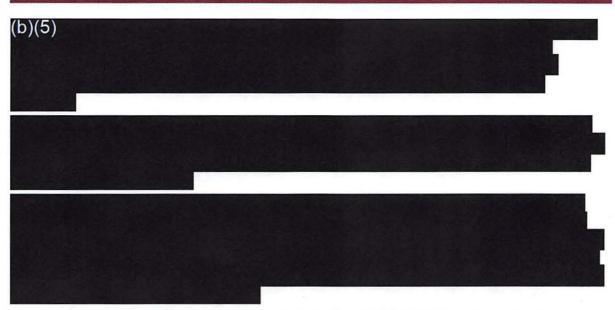
Project Name:								
LL01 Strategy and Planning								
Interview Code:								
LL-01-								
Date/Time:								
February 27, 2015; 9:00am-10:0	)0am							
Location:								
Washington, DC				•				
Purpose:								
To gain perspective on NSC stra	ategy and pla	nning p	rocesses	on Af	ghanistan			
Present								
Candace Rondeaux								
SIGAR Attendees:								
N/A					- NUMBER		1101	
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#### **NSC South Asia Office**

Originally, under Bush the NSC carved out a South Asia directorate that included Afghanistan, Pakistan, India and the other smaller states. In 2008 there was a decision to take India out of the South Asia bureau and to treat Afghanistan and Pakistan separately. It was like a donut hole in the middle of the whole policy for South Asia bureau and to treat Afghanistan and Pakistan separately. It was like a donut hole in the middle of the whole policy for South Asia.



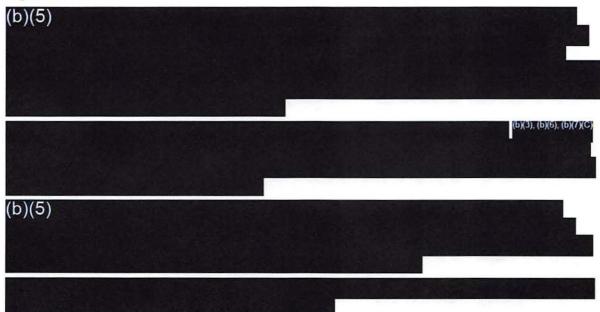
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If there's transparency then how you organize the offices (of the NSC) is not maybe so consequential. But there wasn't a lot of transparency. The fact of the cleavage in the South Asia itself led to a breakdown in transparency. The Obama White House stovepiped everything.

### South Asia office split

It created friction. It created dysfunction and it created bad policy. You need to look at the region as a whole.



There was a lot of animosity between Obama staffers and veterans at the State Department. Frictions over the 2008 campaign continued to resonate. The disdain with which Obama staffers



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treated the State staffers was just unprofessional. Everyone went out of their way to cut each other out of meetings on both sides. They ran the White House like a Senate office and what that meant in practical terms was that decisions were made very slowly. It would take weeks to get a decision on things.

## Review

It did not have many references to the resource issue. It was very focused on policy and strategy objectives. There was no resource discussion. But the fall 2009 review did involve a discussion on resources. They debated troop levels, development assistance, the civilian surge. Then there was the Kerry-Lugar-Berman bill in the fall of 2009, which also raised the issue of Pakistan. The Obama administration just thought if you just hang in there Pakistan will see the light.